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16 March 1956

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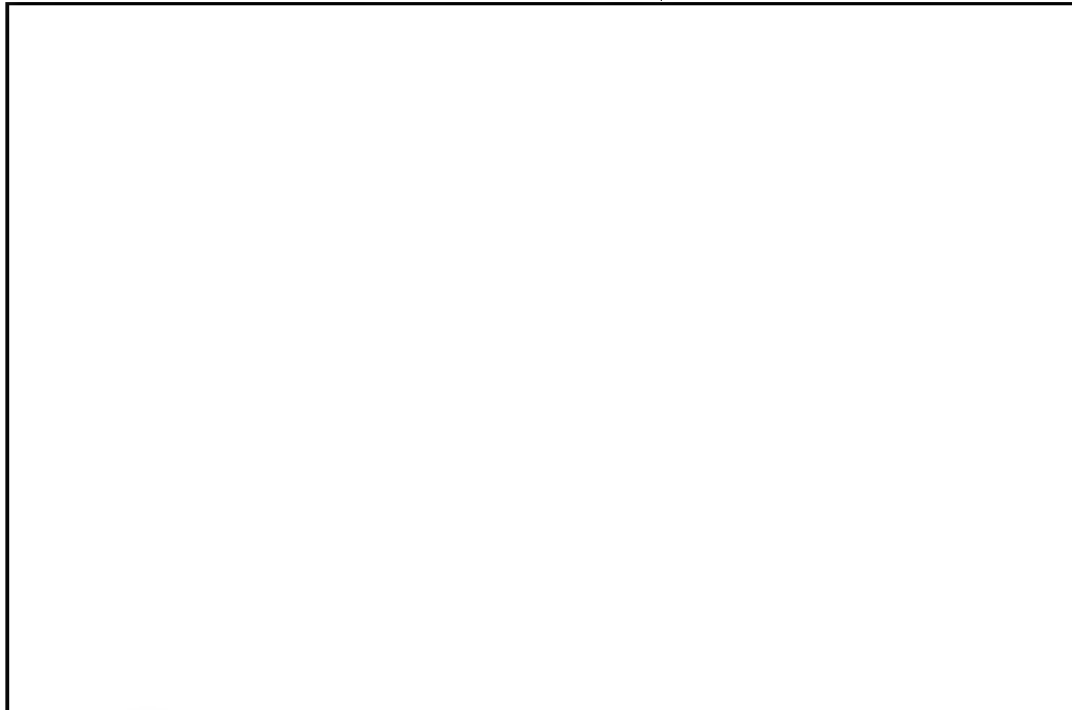
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OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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State Department review completed

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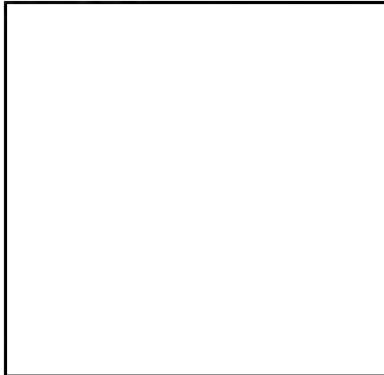
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2. JAPANESE-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS SEEN REACHING TURNING POINT

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The Japanese Foreign Ministry reportedly believes that the next meeting of the Japanese and Soviet negotiators at London, on 17 March, will be a turning point at which Tokyo must decide whether to accept Moscow's proposals or recess the talks indefinitely. General agreement has been reached on all major issues except that of territory, and Soviet delegate Malik has asserted that if Japan will be satisfied with the unconditional return of Shikotan and the Habomai Islands, the unresolved question of naval navigation of the Japan Sea will "settle itself."

Malik emphatically asserted on 10 February and again on 9 March that the question of the return of Sakhalin and the Kurils is closed as far as the USSR is concerned. However, in mid-February the Soviet chief of mission in Tokyo, who has served as an intermediary for informal approaches to Japan, hinted that "under certain circumstances"--probably a reference to US return of the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands--the USSR might make further concessions in the Southern Kurils.

Reports indicate that the Japanese may base their final decision on the results of their talks with Secretary Dulles on 18 and 19 March. This suggests that Tokyo may seek an American commitment to return the Ryukyu and Bonin Islands in order to bolster Japan's bid for the return of the Southern Kurils.

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4. NASR REVIEWS NEAR EAST PROBLEMS

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In the course of a general review of pressing Near Eastern problems, Egyptian prime minister Nasr told Ambassador Byroade he did not be-

lieve there will be war between Israel and the Arab states... Nasr categorically stated, on his word as a soldier, that Egypt would not start a war, and said he believed Arab strength would keep the Israelis from starting one.

Nasr said he has reliable reports that Israel is receiving considerable materiel, other than aircraft, from Europe. He also quoted Israeli sources regarding extensive Israeli recruiting activity in Europe, Latin America and South Africa. He said that if Israel obtained pilots by this means, Egypt might have little alternative to recruiting similar "volunteers" from outside the Arab world.

The prime minister saw little prospect for immediate action on the Johnston plan for Jordan valley development. The principal obstacle, in his view, is Syria, where extreme nationalism and army meddling in politics have created a dangerous situation. Nasr said he felt strongly that something should be done about Syria, but was at a loss to say what.

Comment

Nasr's comments appear to be closely tailored for Western consumption. His "no war" statement in particular is probably designed to counter the publicized British accusation that recent Arab actions have increased the danger of war. While the Egyptian air force is short of pilots, the statement regarding the possibility of recruiting foreign "volunteers" for the air force is probably designed to encourage the West to place restrictions on Israeli recruiting.

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**5. POLISH PEOPLE PRIVATELY REJOICE AT DEATH
OF BIERUT**

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The Polish people, most of whom are rejoicing privately over the death of First Secretary Bierut of the Polish United Workers (Communist) Party, are mystified over the suddenness of his death and suspect that it was due to unnatural causes, according to the American embassy in Warsaw. They note that although Bierut allegedly had

been ill since late February, no public mention or indication of his illness was made until his death on 12 March.



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Comment

The Polish reaction toward Bierut's death is symptomatic of the widespread hatred of the Communist regime, despite its adoption of more moderate policies since Stalin's death and its effort to instill popular confidence in its actions.



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7. PROMINENT SINGAPORE CHINESE MAY VISIT PEIPING

[REDACTED] A Chinese Communist "team" arrived in Singapore on 11 March to invite the president, vice president, and six other leading members of the local Chinese Chamber of Commerce to make an expense-paid tour of Communist China, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Peiping's emissaries apparently were anxious that such a delegation be in China next month at the same time Singapore's Chief Minister Marshall is in London negotiating for the colony's political independence.

[REDACTED] influential members of the local Chinese Chamber of Commerce are divided on whether to accept the invitation, [REDACTED] the British governor, who has been informed, has not yet commented.

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Comment

British authorities in Singapore and Malaya heretofore have not permitted Chinese traveling to Communist China to return. By inducing "respectable" businessmen to visit China at this time, Peiping could reasonably hope to embarrass the British as well as enhance Peiping's rapidly growing prestige among the local Chinese.

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